



# NEWS



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## **CHP HONORS PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS**

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Congress designated the second week of April of each year to honor public safety telecommunicators; the employees who answer 911 calls. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) celebrates National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week, and takes this opportunity to thank the employees who are at the receiving end of the life-saving phone calls at 911 dispatch centers.

“The employees who work tirelessly in our communications centers are oftentimes the unseen heroes on the front line. They provide critical support and are our first-line of defense in an emergency,” said CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow.

Dispatchers continue to adapt to new circumstances, implement new technologies, and help save countless lives. While it is the officer or firefighter who arrives on a scene of an emergency, it is the dispatch personnel who first handle the oftentimes frantic call from an injured party, a frightened eyewitness or other involved citizen. Duties can range from contacting fire, ambulance or other emergency services and calming distraught callers to looking up vehicle identification numbers, plate numbers, driver license numbers and running checks for wanted subjects.

Statewide, the CHP has 25 communications/dispatch centers, which employ nearly 1,000 public safety telecommunicators. In 2010, these individuals were responsible for handling approximately 7.3 million calls for service.

With the volume of calls dispatchers handle, the CHP offers the following reminders: stay calm; be prepared to provide detailed information and respond to a dispatcher’s questions; and, listen carefully and follow any directions provided by the dispatcher. If you accidentally dial 911, do not hang up because the call still goes through to the dispatchers. Stay on the line and advise the dispatcher that you do not have an emergency. This saves the call center a lot of time, because dispatchers DO attempt to return abandoned 911 calls.

“The dispatchers and all emergency personnel should be commended for their selfless and dedicated service they consistently provide our public,” added Commissioner Farrow.

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